

HERITAGE PROTECTION SOCIETY (TASMANIA) INC.

14 May 2020

Department of Justice
Office of the Secretary
GPO Box 825
Hobart TAS 7001

By email to haveyoursay@justice.tas.gov.au

Dear Sir,

Re: Planning Commission Review

Heritage Protection Society (Tasmania) Inc. has interacted with, and attended many hearings, of the Tasmanian Planning Commission, since its inception.

The Tasmanian planning system when established, was considered a pioneering effort and the envy of other States. It has now stood the test of time, and that is to be admired. It is this endurance in the face of a number of failed efforts by pro-development lobbyists to over-ride the work of the Commission and to denigrate their officers when 'inconvenient' determinations are made, to resort to political interference.

The current exercise, is just that – political interference in a well-constituted and qualified Commission.

A word that is often used in relation to the Commission is *trust*, and it is a sad factor that the Tasmanian community has lost confidence in its politicians and certainly lost all sense of trust in them and their motivations. When efforts to restrain or hamper the processes of the Commission by political interference has failed, then comes the wicked hand of restricting resources, of choking the Commission to such an extent as to make its work and depth of its investigative roles, more difficult and less effective.

For the past thirty years, the status of Planning and the parlous situation regarding the effective conservation of our Built, Natural and Cultural Heritage has continued to languish. A process of division of services and the stimulation of interest sectors to compete for adequate resourcing, has been evident, and used as a weapon of combat to stifle community activity and intervention.

It is commonplace in this State, to capitalise on a promoted need to in some way 'save' us from perceived calamity, and therefore implement urgent measures to stimulate economic activity through relaxation of development controls. The present emergency with Covid19 lockdown of the economy, has not only prevented the

community from properly interacting and communicating in the issues raised by this review, but also justified those political tacticians who seek to achieve self-interest advancement of inappropriate developments, to argue the necessity for 'relaxation' or removal of **red and green tape** !!

The standards that our Tasmanian community should be entitled to expect must never be diminished, and it is these standards that make our environments precious and important in this increasingly fragile world. Bullying of the community and taking unfair advantage of the present distress is to be abhorred.

Heritage Protection Society is a member/partner of Planning Matters Alliance Tasmania, and has been actively participating in its analysis and assessment of this Review. We strenuously support its submission, and are confident that it represents the broad interest of the Tasmanian community.

What is lacking in the Tasmanian Planning system is the provision of adequate resourcing, and the provision of resources, vital to achieving a quality outcome and deliverance of determinations that the Tasmanian community will feel pride in.

We call upon Parliament to defeat the current proposition, and focus its attention on equipping the Commission in its daily work, in the service of our community.

Yours faithfully

Lionel J. Morrell Architect
President, For and on behalf of
Heritage Protection Society (Tasmania) Inc.